

Site: SLBE

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Located on the northwest shore of Michigan's Lower Peninsula, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore is one of America's most stunning landscapes. Named for a series of freshwater sand dunes, the park features bluffs that tower above Lake Michigan, splendid sugar sand beaches, cool beech-maple forests, and clear inland lakes. In addition to its natural treasures, the Lakeshore's historic maritime and agricultural landscapes are of a size and quality that are unique on the Great Lakes and rare elsewhere in the nation.

For over a million visitors each year, the Lakeshore offers a wealth of recreational opportunities. Many savor the endless beaches, climb the dunes, or hike breathtaking forests, while others canoe or fish one of the numerous inland lakes and rivers. Many also experience the rich history of northwest Michigan by exploring the shoreline of one of the busiest shipping channels on the inland seas, and behind the dunes, a landscape marked by the former farmsteads of those who settled the area.

The centennial vision for the Lakeshore and its partners is to make this and all national parks beloved by Americans so that they are inspired to support the preservation and protection of the nation's heritage. We see national programs that bring children to visit the parks, that hire adults to work in the parks, and that partner with the entertainment industry to develop high-quality products that inspire and educate as they entertain. Within the Lakeshore, our vision is to preserve and restore the integrity of its amazing natural and cultural resources. To do this, we would restore disturbed lands and remove invasive plants, and restore historic places such as the maritime village of Glen Haven, the South Manitou Island Lighthouse, and the Port Oneida Rural Historic District. Our vision is to get people into the outdoors to enjoy and learn about their natural environment and their heritage. To do this, we would develop a spectacular scenic parkway, construct a Bay-to-Bay multi-use trail system, and build a new overlook atop the perched dunes. We would share this heritage beyond our borders through virtual tours of the Lakeshore's spectacular landscapes.

In 2008, with the expected base increase from the Centennial Initiative, the Lakeshore anticipates being able to provide increased visitor services for Visitor Protection, Interpretation and Maintenance Operations, and to increase opportunities for meaningful volunteerism throughout the Lakeshore.

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore has a growing list of supporters and partners. Some of the partners include: Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes, Manitou Islands Memorial Society, Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear, Electro-Optics Technology Inc., Manufacturing Technology Academy, Manitou Island Transit, American Lighthouse Foundation, Meijer Corporation, and The Nature Conservancy.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Dusty Shultz

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Engineer and build a safer, more accessible way for visitors to enjoy and be inspired by the phenomenal views at the Lake Michigan Overlook on the Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive. This is the only location in the National Lakeshore at which visitors can drive to the top of one of the perched dunes that are the namesake for the park. The route to the existing overlook platform encourages the unsafe behavior of running down the bluff face, and necessitates a long and difficult climb for elderly or disabled visitors. The existing route also requires an inordinate amount of maintenance effort. This project would provide a shorter, safer, simpler way for visitors to access one of the most spectacular views in the entire National Park System.

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ **Improve the condition of park resources and assets.**

☒ **Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.**

Rehabilitate the nationally significant South Manitou Island Lighthouse complex. Illuminate through the use of solar energy the beacon in the lighthouse. Rehabilitate and stabilize the nationally significant Port Oneida Rural Historic District. Over 100 historic structures and 3,400 acres of cultural landscapes would be rehabilitated, stabilized and/or preserved.

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☒ **Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.**

Restore 1,325 acres of land by removing baby's breath. Restoration of land will protect the significant dune environment and provide critical habitat for several rare and listed plant species, one of the most notable being the Threatened Pitcher's thistle. Restore over 700 acres of disturbed lands throughout the Lakeshore by removing pine plantations and restoring old house sites.

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☒ **Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.**

Rehabilitate the nationally significant South Manitou Island Lighthouse complex. Illuminate through the use of solar energy the beacon in the lighthouse. Rehabilitate and stabilize the nationally significant Port Oneida Rural Historic District. Over 100 historic structures and 3,400 acres of cultural landscapes would be rehabilitated, stabilized and/or preserved.

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☒ **Improve the natural resources in parks, as measured by the vital signs developed under the Natural Resource Challenge.**

Provide ecological benchmarks to guide management and restoration of Great Lakes nearshore waters at Sleeping Bear Dunes N.L., Indiana Dunes N.L., Pictured Rocks N.L., Isle Royale National Park, Apostle Islands N.L. and Grand Portage National Monument.

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Establish a National Park Service Land Corps. Specific to the NPS, this Corps would help to carry out the Centennial Projects, and would be established through a national recruiting effort, one that draws heavily from demographics currently under-represented in the NPS work force. The Corps would also serve as an intake program, with the most meritorious members being placed into permanent NPS positions. 1000 jobs each year for the duration of the Centennial, with 100 from each year's "class" moving into NPS jobs.

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Conduct the Special Resource Study called for by P.L. 109-436, the Michigan Lighthouse and Maritime Heritage Act. The study would determine the most effective long-term protection and interpretation of the outstanding maritime heritage of the Great Lakes. It would also analyze the economic and tourism benefits of preserving and interpreting these resources, and address ways to link communities, waterways, parks, and other public spaces into a Michigan Maritime Heritage Network, similar to the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network.

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ Encourage children to be future conservationists.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Establish a national program of taking kids to the parks, similar to Director George Hartzog's "Summer in the Parks" program established in the 1960s. Plan to bring every 5th grader in the nation to a national park site, and not necessarily just the closest one! Overnight trips in the parks that can accommodate it (likely the "natural" parks); special programming in the parks that cannot (to include the more "cultural" parks). Each group of kids would have interaction with a uniformed ranger.

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ENVIRONMENT

☒ Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

☒ Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

Greening the Lakeshore's vehicle fleet. Replace the existing aged interior owned vehicles with hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles. The average age of the Lakeshore's Interior owned vehicle fleet is 19 years. The project would replace 50% of the fleet with alternative fuel vehicles and the infrastructure to support them.

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ENVIRONMENT

☒ Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

☒ Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

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RECREATION

☒ Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level-federal, regional, state, local-to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Develop the Crystal Ridge Scenic Parkway called for the Lakeshore's enabling legislation. Such a parkway would create a spectacular recreational experience for visitors entering the Lakeshore, with fully accessible overlooks, picnic areas, and restrooms. Develop a non-motorized Bay-to-Bay trail system consisting of a 40 mile hiking trail, 32 mile water trail and 40 mile multi-use non-motorized bike path. The trail systems will connect the Lakeshore's primary visitor sites and facilities including the popular Dune Climb, Visitor Center, Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive, D.H. Day and Platte River Campgrounds, Glen Haven and Port Oneida Rural Historic District, Lake Michigan Beaches, primitive campgrounds, and 100 miles of existing trails. It will also provide non-motorized trail connections between popular park sites and the villages of Empire and Glen Arbor.

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RECREATION

☒ Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

☒ Increase visitation by 25 percent at lesser-known parks through a national tourism effort aimed at helping people to discover the breadth of parks and experiences.

Commission the entertainment industry to create entertainment mass media that showcases the national parks in ways that illustrate Centennial Initiative goals. Movies, music, and television would be created by major industry production companies using well-known stars. Each medium would create one production per year for the duration of the Centennial - culminating in the final blockbuster film, series, recording in 2016 that wraps it all up. Initiate a national tourism effort with the National Ad Council that advertises the national parks in ways that further Centennial Initiative goals, including advertising the other national programs associated with it.

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☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Establish a national program of taking kids to the parks, similar to Director George Hartzog's "Summer in the Parks" program established in the 1960s. Plan to bring every 5th grader in the nation to a national park site, and not necessarily just the closest one! Overnight trips in the parks that can accommodate it (likely the "natural" parks); special programming in the parks that cannot (to include the more "cultural" parks). Each group of kids would have interaction with a uniformed ranger.

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EDUCATION

☒ Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

☒ Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Design, create and produce a virtual tour of the Lakeshore for the general public that features historic locations, recreational activities, special areas of the Lakeshore (scenic drive, dune climb, snow shoe trek, underwater shipwrecks etc.). In addition, develop an Electronic Field Trip for educators complete with a curriculum guide for teachers, activities for students, maps, trail guides, videos, pod casts and park images.

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EDUCATION

☒ Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

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PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.

☒ Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.

Establish a National Park Service Land Corps. Specific to the NPS, this Corps would help to carry out the Centennial Projects, and would be established through a national recruiting effort, one that draws heavily from demographics currently under-represented in the NPS work force. The Corps would also serve as an intake program, with the most meritorious members being placed into permanent NPS positions. 1000 jobs each year for the duration of the Centennial, with 100 from each year's "class" moving into NPS jobs.

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☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Establish a servicewide program of organized details into vacant NPS leadership positions. Often these sorts of details are extremely valuable in preparing future leaders, yet they seldom are used, primarily because of a lack of funding for the travel, combined with the loss of workforce for the sending park. With the NPS leadership cohort that is poised to retire, filling this void is more crucial than ever, and an organized, funded detail program would go far to do so.

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PROFESSIONALISM

☒ **Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.**

☒ **Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.**

Commission the entertainment industry to create entertainment mass media that showcases the national parks in ways that illustrate Centennial Initiative goals. Movies, music, and television would be created by major industry production companies using well-known stars. Each medium would create one production per year for the duration of the Centennial - culminating in the final blockbuster film, series, recording in 2016 that wraps it all up. Initiate a national marketing campaign with the National Ad Council that advertises the national parks in ways that further Centennial Initiative goals, including advertising the other national programs detailed in the implementation strategy.

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